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The Execution of the Popish LORD:

OR, THE TRAYTOR'S DOWNFALL.

Being an Account of the

BEHEADING

OF

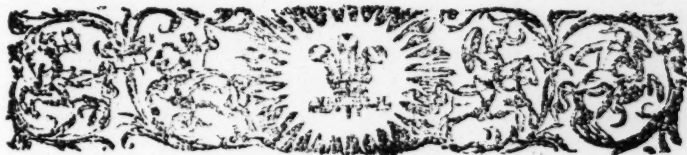
William Viscount Stafford

For High Treason : On the 29th. of this Instant *December*, 1680.
On a Scaffold Erected for that Purpose, on *Tower-hill* : with many
particulars most Remarkable, that happened therein. And of the
Disposal of his Body after Execution. Which may be a large warn-
ing to all the yet remaining Popish Conspirators; how they seek to
take away the Life of the King, and by seeking to destroy the Pro-
testant Religion, have hopes to plant *Papery* once more in *England*.



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The Execution of THE Popish Lord, &c.

IN most Cases it is observ'd, that Traytors seldom depart in Silence or quiet to their Graves, some untimely Death or other still awaits their Impieties, and those that dig Pits for others, most commonly fall into the same themselves; for 'tis certain, that those whom the effects of such Treason most may profit, will in no wise after trust the Traytor, least he upon some distast should Propagate, or at least endeavour the like, against him when opportunity lies fair; For in Ancient

Times it has been noted, that Traytors have been looked upon as Internal Pests, even by those they have Perpetrated their Villanies and Ignominious Treasons to advance: Nay, could not the short sight of Humane Reason dive into their Pernicious ways, the God that views the Secrets of all hearts, would by one means or other lay them open to the World; so that each discerning Soul might fathom the depth of their dire policies, so often is their Wisdom turned into Foolishness: and when they think their Plots most secure, they are nearest discovery; as has been in the most of their late Conspiracies and intended Evasions. But to come nearer to the particulars of this late Lord Viscount Stafford, of whose deserved downfall we are to inform the world.

HE being formerly but a mean Gentleman, but Marrying to the Countess of Stafford, his Majesty was graciously pleased to Confer the Titles and Honours of that Family upon him; for which, Viper-like, he endeavoured to destroy what was the only fountain of his Greatness and Prosperity; by engaging a Damnable and Hellish Plot, against the Life of the King and Protestant Government; which just as it was going to break in upon us, was by the will of Divine Providence, made manifest to the whole Nation; broached even by those that themselves had given the greatest Confidence to; for all the Evidence that have as yet been Instrumental in the Discovery, were those whom
they

they had employ'd for the promoting the Design, so weak is the piercing Intellect of Humane reason compared with that Divine. Full Sixteen Years, according to Evidence, has this Device been managed, not only by the whole Conclave of *Popish Cardinals*, the *Pope*, and the greatest part of his Clergy, but by a great part, if not all the *Popish Nobility* of *England*, *Scotland*, and *Ireland*, whose Estates have been consumed and much impaired in the Management of the same, as hoping to be doubly repayed, in possessing the Lands and Wealths of Hereticks, as was also proved against this Lord. True it is, they looked for a plentiful Harvest because their Design was to fatten the Earth with *Protestant Blood*; nor did the Massacre they designed, portend any less: All above Ten years Old had Perished by prescription, had not the Mercy of an Infinite God interposed to have stopped the Torrent of their Rage, which like a Flood was swel'd even with the Banks, and just prepared to overflow Church and State; but in what they thought themselves most secure, they were found most Weak, for by Murthering Sir *Edmundbury Godfrey*, to prevent a farther Discovery, they laid their Wicked Projects open to the view of all; whereupon many of the Plotting Traytors were Detected, and amongst the rest, this Viscount continuing by a Commitment of Parliament a long space Prisoner in the Tower, where no ways were left unpracticed to gain his Freedom, but his

his nor any the rest could prevail, for on the Thirtieth of *November* he was brought in a Barge from his Imprisonment, to *Westminster-Hall*, where the Great Court of Justice was Erected for his Tryal, the Tower Ax being born before him: His Looks at the beginning of his Tryal were Blith and Chearful, as not fearing any ill Consequence, but when he heard the Witnesses swear, in number Three, That he would have Hired some or all of them, to Murther the King, and that the Protestants should be Massacred, and that he was in the Conspiracy to bring in a Foreign Power, and to Establish *Popery*, he began to Tremble and look pale. It's true, he produced many Witnesses, but they could not speak any thing to the purpose in his behalf, their Affirmation consisted only in Circumstances, and rather perjudiced his Cause then farther'd it; In fine, he was found Guilty by his Peers, the Lords Temporal assembled in Parliament, and according to his just Deserts, received Sentence of death; being conveyed back to the Tower, where he continued till this day, preparing for his Latter end, yet by no means forsaking those preposterous Superstitions that had brought such Ruine on his Head.

In the morning he was brought out of the Tower, attended by a Guard of Partisans and Souldiers, the Tower Hamlets making a Lane for him to pass

pass to the Scaffold, prepared for his Execution; great part of the City Train'd-bands being in Arms. When he came to the Scaffold he was helped up by two or three Attendants; and being mounted looked very wishfully, as loath (no doubt) to dye: for sure it is, how ever men can slight death at a distance, yet when it comes near them, and is certain, it strikes a Consternation, especially where the Breast is charged with Guilt and diabolick Treasons.

After he had spoke to some of his Friends, and made several prayers to himself, for the most part holding in his hand, as it is said, his Beads and Crucifix, he kneeled down to try how the Block fitted, then having a Cap on, he after some consideration, gave the Executioner a sign to strike, which he did, and with one inforced stroke, divided the Head from the body, both of them containing motion of Life for a while, but the body longest.

After Execution his Head and body were wrapped up in a convenient Garment, or put in a Coffin, and carried back to be disposed of as his Majesty shall think fit. Thus was he Rewarded for his Treasonable practices, and received the Merits due to such Hellish intents; so that although Justice doth oftentimes delay, yet at last it will strike home, to the destroying from off the face of the earth.

earth, all such as wilfully Sin against their own Consciences, to gratifie Ambition or Revenge, against such who never offered them the least Indignity: For as not only this Lord, but many others did confess that the King could no ways be found fault withal, but was a good and just Prince, but being a Heretick and not for their turns, he must be made away. So the Devil, out of envy to their Happiness, plotted the Downfal of our first Parents in *Paradise*, and ever since wicked men have envy to those that are Upright.



F I N I S.

